

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in this application. Claims 13 - 19 have been withdrawn. Claims 1, 6, 8, and 9 are currently independent. Claims 4, 5 and 7 have been canceled.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 3, 4(3), 5, 6, 7(4), 8, 9, 11, and 12 are allowable.

The Office Action states that claims 3, 4(3), 5, 6, 7(4), 8, 9, 11, and 12 are objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have re-written claims 5, 6, 8, and 9 into independent form, including the subject matter of intervening claim 4. Claim 5 has been incorporated into claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejection - 35 USC 112

Claims 1-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Claim 2 has been amended to state plural elements, consistent with claim 1. The same change has been made to claim 3, as well. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejection - 35 USC 102

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by JP 2002-329580 (Fumio).

By this Amendment, only non-rejected claims remain. In particular,

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable claim 5, as well as intervening claim 4.

Allowable claims 6, 8, and 9 have been re-written into independent form, including subject matter from intervening claim 4.

Claims 2, 3, and 10 remain dependent on claim 1. Claims 11 and 12 depend on claim 10.

Thus, Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 6, 8, and 9, as well as dependent claims 2, 3, 10-12, are presently allowable. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert W. Downs (Reg. No. 48,222) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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